

## The Merger of the Scottish Further Education Funding Council and the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council

### Comments

Glasgow City Council's Development and Regeneration Services (DRS) welcomes the opportunity to offer comment on the proposed merger.

Firstly, as the local education authority, lifelong learning is of prime concern to the Council as it is fundamental in creating a prosperous and fulfilling life for its citizens. The role which the further and higher education sectors play in achieving this objective is fully recognised and platforms already exist within the city for collaborative working across the sectors.

*Glasgow's Continuing Prosperity – a joint economic strategy for Glasgow* is the economic component of the Glasgow Community Plan. Although, under the auspices of the Glasgow Economic Forum its implementation and development is led by DRS and Scottish Enterprise Glasgow, a significant contribution is already made by the FE and HE sectors particularly under Goal 4, Competitive workforce. Glasgow City Council, therefore, does not need to be convinced of the benefits a strong FE and HE sector can bring not just to the individual but also to the prosperity to the city and to Scotland as a whole.

It is in this context, therefore, that DRS provides the following comment:

- A strategic approach to tertiary education in Scotland is a given. If, by creating the new body, greater synergy and coherence is achieved and contributes to the attainment of our economic and social objectives, the Council would endorse its establishment;
- As a promoter of equal access to lifelong learning, the Council would be anxious to ensure that the distinctive features and benefits of both sectors are not undermined, that a flexible approach to the delivery of academic and vocational education is maintained and that the needs of the end user are not overlooked;
- The Council endorses the view that there is an important role for the tertiary education sector in Glasgow's Community Planning Partnership and in the LEF. Accordingly, it would encourage the involvement of the new body on both forums with a view to working together to identify gaps in provision and agree how best to fill them;
- The Council would endeavour to assist the new body where possible in order for it to fulfil its obligations.